

LINCOLN-LANCASTER COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

3140 N STREET ♦ LINCOLN, NE 68510

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FLUORESCENT LIGHT TUBES

There are currently two types of fluorescent tubes on the market: standard tubes and low-mercury tubes.

Why are standard fluorescent tubes a problem?

- ⊙ *Standard fluorescent tubes are not allowed in the Lincoln landfill.*
- ⊙ Standard fluorescent light tubes contain enough mercury to pose health hazards to humans and animals.
- ⊙ Mercury will evaporate and volatilize in the atmosphere. Breathing air contaminated with mercury can cause nerve damage, liver damage, blindness and can cause brain damage in young children and fetuses.
- ⊙ Mercury can enter drinking water supplies, lakes, rivers and streams, threatening aquatic life, plants, animals and humans.
- ⊙ Mercury has the ability to build up in tissues of aquatic food chains to the point that consumption of fish is hazardous to birds, mammals, and humans.

What are low-mercury fluorescent tubes?

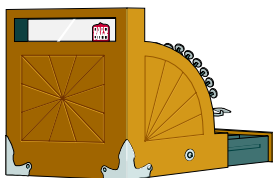
- ⊙ Low-mercury tubes contain 40% to 50% less mercury than standard tubes. This quantity of mercury is assured by the process used to inject mercury into each tube. This process is an example of source reduction.
- ⊙ Low-mercury tubes pass Toxicity Characteristic Leachate Test (TCLP)—a test that certain wastes must pass before they can be discarded in a landfill—at all stages of their life cycle.
- ⊙ Low-mercury tubes can be discarded in the Lincoln landfill as special waste.



What are the disposal and permit requirements for Businesses disposing of low-mercury fluorescent tubes?

- ⊙ All mercury tubes must be reported on each business's special waste inventory, even if that business generates less than 43 lbs per month.
- ⊙ Quantities *less* than 43 lbs of low-mercury tubes per month may be placed in the landfill without a permit. A permit will be required if *more* than 43 lbs of low-mercury tubes per month are disposed in the landfill. (Forty-three lbs is the equivalent of approximately 114 four-foot T12 tubes per month.)
- ⊙ Contact the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department to obtain a permit for the low-mercury tubes.

How does the cost of low-mercury tubes compare to the cost of standard tubes?



- ⊙ Prices of low-mercury tubes are approximately the same as standard tubes. Check with distributors to compare prices between each type of tube.
- ⊙ The energy requirements are the same for each type of tube.
- ⊙ Disposal costs are typically 50 to 75 cents for standard tubes; this cost and extra handling time can be eliminated by using low-mercury tubes.
- ⊙ Recycling may be more cost effective than paying for a permit if your business generates more than 43 lbs of fluorescent tubes per month.



Financing provided through the Waste Reduction and Recycling Incentive Grants Program, Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality.

Where can low-mercury fluorescent tubes be obtained?

- ⦿ Several local vendors sell low-mercury tubes (see the list below). Each vendor usually distributes only Phillips, General Electric, or Osram-Sylvania products.
- ⦿ Check with each vendor to make sure the tube you need is available as a low-mercury product.
- ⦿ The Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department does not endorse or recommend any specific manufacturer or vendor.

Consolidated Electrical Distributors 2611 Kimco Dr., Suite 1 465-5151	Crescent Electric 540 Westgate Boulevard 476-2712	Grainger Div of WW Grainger Inc 100 Oak Creek Drive 476-9014
Kriz-Davis Company 4017 Progressive Avenue 467-3648	Lincoln Electric Supply Company 1800 Adams 476-3281	Husker Electric Supply 3450 Cornhusker Highway 467-4624
Voss Lighting 5200 South 16 Street 421-6449	Wesco Distribution 3100 N 33 Street 467-5311	White Electric Design Lighting 410 South 10 Street 476-7587
Lamp & Lighting Warehouse 1750 West "O" St. 435-3407 Toll Free: 888-548-3748 fax: 435-6142		

Where can I take fluorescent tubes and other mercury waste to be recycled?

- ⦿ Recyclers of fluorescent tubes and other mercury wastes are listed below.
- ⦿ Contact the companies directly for information regarding shipping, containers, or costs.
- ⦿ Each company may offer additional services other than those listed below.
- ⦿ The Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department does not endorse or recommend any specific vendor.

Company	Contact	Wastes Collected
A-Tec Recycling POBox 7391 Des Moines, IA 50309	Larry Young (800)551-4912	lighting waste only
A to Z Recycle 264 Road 1 Columbus, NE 68601	Kenneth Babel (402)563-1048	will not collect treated lumber, pigments, spill kits
Kris-Davis Wholesale 10404 J Street Omaha, NE 68127	Greg Stickler (800)747-5740	lighting waste only
Light Cycle, Inc. 1222 University Avenue St. Paul, MN 55104	Steve Jacobs (651)651-1309 (800)274-1309	will not collect pigments or special paper coatings
Mercury Waste Solutions, Inc. 2007 West County Rd, C-2 Roseville, MN 55113-1211	Dennis P. McNaughton (651)628-9370	all of the wastes listed on the right.
Midwest Recycling & Mercury Recovery 860 White Street Daybrook, IA 52001	Wayne Zumhof (800)311-9636	will also collect transformers, most radioactive waste, coils, and capacitors.
Recycle Lights, Inc. 401 West 86th Street Minneapolis, MN 55420	Karen Healy (612)948-0626	will not collect pigments or treated lumber
Safety Kleen 13915 A Plaza Omaha, NE 68144	Rick Dost (402)333-6321	all of the wastes listed on the right.
Environmental Compliance Enterprises 1321 North 68th St. Lincoln, NE 68505	Joe Engler (402)466-2268	all of the wastes listed on the right.

Which solid wastes contain mercury?

- ☒ Fluorescent light tubes
- ☒ High intensity discharge (HID) lamps or bulbs
- ☒ Thermometers
- ☒ Barometers
- ☒ Pigments
- ☒ Dental Amalgams
- ☒ Special Paper Coatings
- ☒ Mercury Switches
- ☒ Filmpack Batteries
- ☒ Button Batteries
- ☒ Blood Pressure Gauges
- ☒ Manometers
- ☒ Dialysis Pharmaceuticals
- ☒ Mercury Chlorides
- ☒ Specific Contaminated Soils
- ☒ Mercury Spills
- ☒ Contaminated Spill Kits
- ☒ Pressure Treated Lumber
- ☒ Non-PCB and PCB Ballast